GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:595
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2015
Central Monitoring System
Reddy Shri A.P. Jithender

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the progress made by the Government in rolling out the Central Monitoring System (CMS), as well as the expected timeline for operationalization of CMS across the country;

(b) the total funds approved/released by the Government for setting up of the CMS;

(c) whether the scope, objectives and framework of the CMS has struck a balance between national security, online privacy and free speech;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether the Government is considering any other similar initiatives for lawful interception and monitoring of communications, along with the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (e) Madam, Government has decided to set up the Centralized Monitoring System (CMS) to automate the process of Lawful Interception & Monitoring of telecommunications. Technology development and Pilot trials have been completed and the system is anticipated to be progressively operationalised from the end of the financial year.

(b) Cabinet Committee on Security has approved the project of CMS with government funding of Rs 400 Crores.

(c) & (d) To take care of the privacy of citizens, lawful interception and monitoring is governed by the Section 5(2) of Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 read with Rule 419A of Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Rules, 2007 wherein oversight mechanism exists in form of review committee under chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary at Central Government level and Chief Secretary of the State at the State Government level. The same mechanism is applicable for the interception under the CMS Project also. Additionally, there is an inbuilt mechanism of check and balance as Security Agencies/Law Enforcement Agencies cannot provision the target and the provisioning agency cannot see the content.